

MILWAUKEE CHILD WELFARE PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES
Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services
Friday, November 11, 2022
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, the meeting was conducted by Zoom rather than in-person. The Zoom meeting information was made available on the DCF DMCPs Milwaukee Child Welfare Partnership Council webpage on November 7, 2022 (<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/mcps/partnership-council>).

Members Present

At the request of Chairperson Christine Holmes, a roll call was taken to identify the Partnership Council members present for the meeting.

Present were Libby Mueller, Judge Jane Carroll, Carmen Pitre, Christine (Chris) Holmes, Dr. Mallory O'Brien, Steve Gilbertson, Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Supervisor Patti Logsdon, Linda Davis, Representative David Bowen, Senator LaTonya Johnson,

A quorum of the Council was present on the Zoom meeting.

Chairperson Holmes introduced new Partnership Council members Judge Jane Carroll from Children's Court and returning member Linda Davis, a community member and student of Child Welfare.

Kelly Pethke appeared as a community member; her oath of office was signed effective November 15, 2022, as a member of the Partnership Council.

Notice of Meeting

Chairperson Christine Holmes reviewed compliance with Open Meetings Law requirements.

First, the notice of the meeting was published on the DCF and DOA websites on November 7, 2022, and in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on November 7, 2022. Second, the notice was emailed to the newspaper of record for the State of Wisconsin, the Wisconsin State Journal, on November 3, 2022. The notice was emailed to the Partnership Council stakeholders including any media who had requested such notice on November 7, 2022. Finally, the agenda was posted on the front door of the DMCPs building at 635 N. 26th St. on November 7, 2022. This satisfies the requirements for notice under Wis. Stat. 19.84(1)(b).

Chairperson Holmes reminded council members of the Public Records Law training that must be completed by member.

Review and Approval of Past Minutes, Chris Holmes, Chair

Supervisor Patti Logsdon made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2022, Partnership Council meeting. Representative David Bowen seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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Independent Monitoring Report (IMR) and Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services

Response, Tyler Oettinger, Quality Review and Performance Analysis Section Manager, Bureau of Performance Management & Sarah Henery, Administrator, Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services

Tyler Oettinger reported results for the Semi-Annual Independent Monitoring Report from January to June 2022 and historic Settlement Agreement measures from 2018 to June 2022. For the background of the report, Tyler Oettinger mentioned the one-year anniversary of the dismissal of the Settlement Agreement in September 2022. A part of the agreement to dismiss was the Department of Children and Families (DCF) commitment to continue to be transparent and report information on Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services (DMCPS) and the Settlement Agreement measures until the end of 2022. DCF and DMCPS expanded the scope of information presented to include measurements pertaining to Access, permanency, well-being, and the workforce.

The 2022 Semi-Annual Report, January and June 2022, and presentation can be found here:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/mcps/partnership/2022pc/january-june-2022-semiannual-dmcps-independent-monitoring-report.pdf>

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/mcps/partnership/2022pc/final-2022-mcwpc-presentation-of-semiannual-jan-jun-imr.pdf>

Council Member Comments and Questions Regarding Presentation

Linda Davis and Chairperson Holmes requested more information be provided on the 40 children who re-entered out-of-home care. Sarah Henery stated that there was more re-entry information presented than previous years and the information is based on the last 12 months. Tyler Oettinger stated he can look into adding more specifics for the next presentation, but re-entry is low and decreased within the last 5 years.

Linda Davis expressed her concern regarding the number of completed medical exams decreasing and the number of children that were out of AFSA compliance. Linda Davis asked if there can also be reporting on children's education. Sarah Henery commented that the AFSA numbers are not to her liking as well, but post-pandemic staffing challenges may have been a factor.

Senator LaTonya Johnson asked if staff exit survey information only included 2017 information or 2017 through 2022. The exit survey information was from between 2017-2022. Senator Johnson asked if exit surveys were administered in writing or in-person. There was not clear information on how the exit surveys are administered by each agency. Senator Johnson suggests if staff are not completing written forms, there should be in-person exit surveys. She would like more concrete information on the cause of staff departures to improve retention. Sarah Henery stated that staff do not always give honest feedback in exit surveys to preserve a positive relationship.

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Susanna Leggio stated that Children's Wisconsin has a formal Human Resources exit survey process. They also have an informal process where managers reach out to have a conversation with staff on reasons for leaving. Jenny Keefe stated that Wellpoint Care Network has a formal exit process as well. An online survey is conducted. Wellpoint Care Network incorporated a pre-resignation checklist this year that leaders in child welfare complete when they receive a resignation. The results of the checklist showed compensation was the biggest reason staff left in 2022.

Sarah Henery stated if council members have suggestions on data points and measurements that they would like included in the next iteration of the monitoring report to send them to her. DMCPs is aiming to have a proposal by February or May meeting of the council.

Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services Strategic Plan, Lilia Figueroa, Policy Initiatives Advisor & Bridget Chybowski, Deputy Administrator, Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services

The presentation can be found here:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/mcps/partnership/2022pc/mcwpc-dmcp-s-strategic-planning-november-2022.pdf>

Lilia Figueroa highlighted DMCPs's overall vision of safe children and healthy families in Milwaukee County. DMCPs's mission, vision, and core values are streamlined into inspiring goals and to influence outcomes. DMCPs's mission is to prioritize child safety and to preserve families. DMCPs's vision focuses on the community, healing generational trauma, and being a resource to families in need. DMCPs's core values guide DMCPs's work, determine how DMCPs will achieve their mission, and reinforce priorities.

Goals from Core Team that are being used as a foundation of the strategic plan:

- A healthy, engaged, and knowledgeable workforce, resulting in a high performing division. To foster a workplace where staff are engaged with each other, supported to grow and develop as professionals, and are empowered.
- Engage in consistent and quality practice for the betterment of children by using data to drive decision making and improvement.
- Keep children safe through innovative practices. Promote positive practices which care for children in ways that lead to successful outcomes for them and to improve well-being for families overall.
- Cultivate meaningful partnerships to strengthen the community. Focus on being more intentional and collaborative with community partners and stakeholders and educating families on opportunities about community resources.

Bridget Chybowski asked for feedback. She asked if there are any questions on what the goals mean. Chairperson Holmes asked how meaningful goals are to direct-line staff and if their

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performance is directly related to the goals. Bridget Chybowski answered that direct-line staff were consulted in the creation and development of the goals. Lilia Figueroa added that the case management agencies also gave feedback.

Chairperson Holmes asked if the teams and/or agencies can be tracked to the outcomes of these goals. Bridget Chybowski answered there was a meeting to talk about the metrics to use to evaluate progress toward the goals on 11/10/2022.

Linda Davis suggested more adequately addressing the external goals and include specific engagement with cross system partners, the other branches of government, and the County Board within the plan. Bridget agreed that there needs to be shared ownership with partners on multiple levels. Linda Davis suggested a stratification of cross central partners separate from community partners and stakeholders in the Strategic Planning.

Bridget Chybowski listed the groups DMCPs is gathering feedback from and presented the DMCPs Strategic Planning timeline. The next steps are for the Strategic Planning partners to continue to work with Core Team, Executive Sponsor, DMCPs staff and stakeholders.

Approval of 2023 Meeting Dates, Chris Holmes, Chair

Chairperson Chris Holmes proposed the 2023 meeting dates:

- February 10, 2023
- May 12, 2023
- August 11, 2023
- November 10, 2023

The time of the meetings will remain 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Chairperson Holmes asked if council members would like to meet in person or continue to meet virtually. Sarah Henery stated there may be an ability to do hybrid meetings. If people are interested, it can be considered. Chairperson Holmes would like to utilize the hybrid model. There may be a hybrid option for the next meeting on February 10, 2023. Steve Gilbertson stated in chat he would like the hybrid option.

If Council members have agenda items for Partnership Council meetings, they can be directed to Lauren Washington.

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Bylaws Amendments, Libby Mueller, Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee Chair and Sarah Henery, Administrator, Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services

The presentation can be found here:

https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/mcps/partnership/2022pc/mcwpc.dmcps_subcommittee.recommendations.presentation.pdf

Sarah Henery presented DMCPs recommendation for Bylaws Committee Updates. Sarah Henery stated there is an opportunity to rethink subcommittee structure. The three main standing Committees are a part of the bylaws and would require revisions of the bylaws to make new committees or change the current committee structure.

Critical Incident Committee is an appointed citizen review panel recognized by the DCF. One of the functions of the committee is to serve as the review panels to review Act 78 cases. To help take pressure off of previous quorum issues, the committee has 3 appointed council members; only 2 members are needed for quorum. DMCPs recommended keeping the Critical Incident Committee. Linda Davis suggested using this Committee as a forum for systemic change as well.

Health and Education Committee's purpose based on the bylaw's language is to address issues related to the physical, mental, and dental health of children served by DMCPs, and issues related to the education of children served by DMCPs. Sarah Henery expressed that this was a well-attended meeting but not by council members. It has been a challenge to meet quorum. DMCPs recommended eliminating the Health and Education Committee and bringing those presentations directly to the Partnership Council instead. Linda Davis stated that the Committee may have outgrown its previous urgency and agreed that much can be brought to Partnership Council meeting.

Senator Johnson asked if it was possible to send members that do not regularly attend council meetings a notice. Sarah Henery stated that this may be a peer question for council members. DMCPs does send out reminders and there is significant administrative effort put into the meeting. The Governor Office does consider attendance with appointments and re-appointments. Linda Davis commented Partnership Council members should be proactive to keep each other accountable.

Chairperson Holmes asked when people are appointed are their responsibilities listed out. Sarah Henery stated appointment letters are sent, an oath is taken, and criteria is listed. There was an orientation held by DMCPs in 2021 but only one person attended.

Libby Mueller stated there has been a historic problem with attendance and suggested to consider restructuring meetings to focus on issues that need to be discussed urgently. Sarah Henery presented that the Out-of-Home Care Committee has not met often over the last years, and it became more of an informational sharing meeting. The Committee currently does not have a chair after Judge Crivello stepped down.

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The ultimate recommendation regarding the committees is to keep the Critical Incident Committee and eliminate Health and Education Committee and Out-of-Home Care Committee. DMCPs does have committee suggestions for other areas that pertain to bigger challenges and that align with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

FFPSA Update, Sarah Henery, Administrator, Division of Milwaukee Child Protective Services

Most Milwaukee prevention work is done outside of DMCPs or DCF. Sarah Henery stated that DMCPs is focused on how to use expertise of understanding what leads families into foster care and tap into resources to help children and families and prevent removal in the first place. DMCPs suggests “Milwaukee Prevention Services Committee” as a new council subcommittee to discuss system improvement processes both in child protective services (CPS) and externally. This subcommittee could also gather data about the needs of families. DMCPs’s recommendation is to replace one committee with the Milwaukee Prevention Services Committee.

DMCPs suggests a “Reducing Group Care” or “MKE Teen Supports” Committee that would be tied to the work Casey Family Programs is doing with the Breaking Barrier’s project. The subcommittee could focus work on reducing the use of group care and examine issues facing Milwaukee teens and what is needed to support them. Finding out-of-home care placements for older youth is challenging and usually most teens are not interested in new families. There is more to do outside of the child welfare system to support teens and to prevent them from experiencing group care.

Chairperson Holmes asked if any of the subcommittees are legislatively written into law. Sarah Henery answered no, they are all a part of the council’s bylaws. Chairperson Holmes motioned to dissolve the Health and Education Committee. Libby Mueller seconded motion. Called the vote. No Council member opposed. Motion passed. Committee was dissolved.

Chairperson Holmes motioned to dissolved Out-of-Care committee. Linda Davis seconded. Called the vote. No Council member opposed. Motion passed. Committee was dissolved. Chairperson Holmes called for looking into the framework and changes in Bylaws for the proposed Milwaukee Prevention Services Committee and Reducing Group Care Committee for the next Council meeting.

Judge Jane Carroll stated family interaction, the contact that children in out-of-home care have with family, has been an issue brought up in court and it’s been a struggle. Judge Carroll would like to see this be a topic in the committees. Linda Davis suggested there may be a need to go back to basics of visitation and would like a presentation about Children’s Court at next meeting. Sarah Henery responded this could be brought to Council meeting or an Ad Hoc committee and she can ask partners to present on out-of-home care visitation. Linda Davis expressed this has been a success story to change Bylaws.

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Community Input and Concluding Remarks, Chris Holmes, Chair

Chairperson Chris Holmes expressed her sadness regarding the article on domestic violence in the newspaper with Carmen Pitre.

Susanna Leggio stated that Adoption Day is approaching, and Children's Wisconsin is planning a big celebration. Judge Jane Carroll stated 45 children are being adopted into 29 families. Jenny Keefe announced a job fair for November 16, 2022, at WellPoint Care Network. Jenny reported that 12 people have been hired in the last month at Wellpoint Care Network and they are hoping to hire more by the end of the year.

Adjourn

Chairperson Chris Holmes thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting.